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ADDRESS

3.

OF THE

SOCIETY

OF

UNITED IRISHMEN

OF

DUBLIN,

TO

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, L. D. D.

SIR,

SUFFER a Society which has been caluminated as devoid of all sense of religion, law, or morality, to sympathise with one, whom calumny of a similar kind is about to drive from his native land, a land which he has adorned and enlightened in almost every branch of liberal literature, and of useful philosophy. The emigration of DOCTOR PRIESTLEY, will form a striking historical fact, by which alone, future ages will learn to estimate truly the temper of the present times. Your departure will not only give evidence of the injury which philosophy and Literature have received in your person, but will prove the accumulation of petty disquietudes, which has robbed your life of its zest and enjoyment, for at your age no one would willingly embark on such a voyage; and sure we are, it was your wish and prayer to be buried in your native country, which contains the dust of your old friends, SAVILE, PRICE, JEBB, and FOTHERGILL. But be cheerful dear Sir, you are going to a happier world—the world of WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN.

In Idea, we accompany you. We stand near you while you are setting sail. We watch your eyes that linger on the white cliffs, and we hear the patriarchal blessing which your soul pours out on the land of your nativity, the aspiration that ascends to God for its peace, its freedom, and its prosperity. Again, do we participate in your feelings on first beholding nature in her noblest scenes and grandest features; on finding man busied in
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rendering himself worthy of nature, but more than all, on contemplating with philosophic prescience, the coming period when those vast inland seas shall be shadowed with sails, when the St. Lawrence and Mississippi, shall stretch forth her arms to embrace the continent in a great circle of interior navigation; when the Pacific Ocean shall pour into the Atlantic; when man will become more precious than *fine gold*, and when his ambition shall be to *subdue the elements*, not to *subjugate his fellow creatures*, to make fire water, earth, and air obey his bidding, but to leave the pure ætherial mind, as the sole thing in nature free and incoercible.

Happy indeed would it be, were men in power to recollect this quality of the human mind. Suffer us to give them an example from a science of which you are a mighty master, that attempts to fix the element of mind only encrease its activity, and that to calculate what may be from what has been, is a very dangerous deceit. Were all the saltpetre in India monopolized, this would only make chemical researches more ardent and successful. The chalky earths would be searched for it, and nitre beds would be made in every cellar and every stable. Did not that prove sufficient, the genius of chemistry would find in a new salt a substitute for nitre or a power superior to it.† It requires greater genius than Mr. Pitt seems to possess, to know the wonderful *resources of mind*, when patriotism animates philosophy and all the arts and sciences are put under a state of requisition, when the attention of a whole scientific people is bent on multiplying the means and instruments of destruction, and when philosophy rises in a mass to drive on the wedge of War. A black powder has changed the military art, and in a great degree the manners of mankind. Why may not the same science which produced it, produce another powder which inflamed under a certain compression, might impel the air so as to shake down the strongest towers, and scatter destruction.

But you are a going to a Country where Science is turned to better uses. Your change of place will give room for the matchless activity of your Genius; and you will take a sublime pleasure in bestowing on Britain the benefit of your future Discoveries. As matter changes its form, but not a particle is ever lost, so the principles of virtuous minds are equally imperishable; and your change of situation may even render *Truth* more operative, *Knowledge* more productive, and, in the event, *Liberty* itself more universal. Wafted by the winds, or tost by the waves the seed that is *here* thrown out as dead, *there* shoots up and flourishes. It is probable that emigration to America, from the

† Mr. BERTHOLET discovered that oxygenated muriatic gas, received in a ley of caustic pot-ash, forms a crystallizable neutral salt which detonates more strongly than nitre.



first settlement downward, has not only served the Cause of General Liberty, but will eventually and circuitously serve it even in Britain. What mighty events have arisen from that Germ which might once have been supposed to be left for ever in the Woods of America, but thrown upon the Bosom of Nature, the Breath of GOD revived it, and the World hath gathered its Fruits. Even Ireland has contributed her share to the Liberties of America; and while purblind Statesmen were happy to get rid of the stubborn Presbyterians of the North, they little thought that they were serving a good cause in another quarter—Yes! the VOLUNTEERS of Ireland still live—they live across the Atlantic. Let this idea animate us in our sufferings, and may the pure principles and genuine lustre of the British Constitution, reflected from *their Coasts*, penetrate into *our Cells*, and *our Dungeons*.

Farewel—great and good Man! great by your Mental Powers, by your multiplied Literary Labours, but greater still by those Household Virtues which form the only solid security for public conduct, by those mild and gentle qualities, which far from being adverse to, are most frequently attended with severe and inflexible Patriotism, rising like an Oak above a modest Mansion.—Farewell—but before you go, we beseech a portion of your parting Prayer to the Author of Good, for ARCHIBALD HAMILTON ROWAN, the pupil of JEBB, our Brother now suffering imprisonment, and for all those who have suffered, and are about to suffer in the same cause—the cause of impartial and adequate representation—the cause of the Constitution. Pray to the best of Beings for MUIR, PALMER, SKIRVING, MARGAROT, and GERALD, who are now, or will shortly be crossing, like you, the bleak Ocean, but to a barbarous Land!—Pray that they may be animated with the same Spirit which, in the days of their Fathers, triumphed at the Stake, and shone in the midst of Flames! Melancholy, indeed, it is that the mildest and most humane of all Religions should have ever been so perverted as to hang or burn men in order to keep them of one faith. It is equally melancholy, that the most deservedly extolled of Civil Constitutions should recur to similar modes of coercion, and that hanging and burning are not now employed, principally because measures *apparently milder*, are considered as more effectual. Farewell! Soon may you embrace your Sons on the American Shore, and WASHINGTON take you by the hand, and the Shade of FRANKLIN look down, with calm delight, on the first Statesman of the age extending his protection to its first Philosopher.

March 28, 1794.

SOCIETY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION.

LONDON March 28, 1794.

*Resolved that the following Address be sent to Messrs.*MUIR, PALMER, SKIRVING, MARGAROT
and GERALD.

FRIENDS and FELLOW CITIZENS.

ALTHOUGH we have hitherto been the silent, yet we have by no means been the unconcerned Spectators of your Conduct and Sufferings. We have seen and approved of your exertions for your Country's Happiness—We have marked with Honest Indignation, every step that your Enemies have taken to bring you to your present situation. Your Enemies are the Enemies of PUBLIC LIBERTY the Men who are conspiring against the Happiness of Mankind. The Cause in which you embarked, and to which you have borne an honourable testimony, is worthy of every exertion, and its importance to the World too great, to expect its accomplishment without Opposition.

The History of Liberty, for whose sake you are doomed to a long and unmerited Exile, will afford in the present instance, that Consolation, that former Martyrs to the same Cause have experienced: the consolation, that you *will not*, you *cannot*, Suffer in vain.

Men may perish, but Truth will prevail; neither Persecution, nor Banishment, nor Death itself, can *finally* injure the progress of those Principles which involve the General Happiness of Man.

While therefore we join every Friend to Humanity in lamenting what you have *already* endured, and with anxious hearts, anticipate the Perils to which you *may* be exposed in a barren and uncultivated Country; yet we can rejoice that the sources of Happiness are limited to no place, but are as extensive as the dominion of GOD; under the Protection of that GREAT BEING, may you at all Times, and in all Places, feel the pleasure that arises from conscious Integrity.

Fellow Citizens, we assure you that the memory of your virtue shall never be effaced from our Breasts; the Cause for which you have struggled, is a Glorious Cause, the World that has witnessed your exertions, shall witness ours also.

A full and fair Representation of the People of Great Britain, we seek with all the ardour of Men and Britons, for the sake of of which we are not only ready to act with Vigour and Unanimity, but we trust, prepared also to Suffer with Constancy.

Our best wishes will ever attend you, and we do believe that the Day is not very distant, when we shall again receive you on the British shores, the welcome Children of a FREE and HAPPY COUNTRY.

By Order of the Society.



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